

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for operating a contact center, the contact center including a plurality of agents to service a plurality of contacts~~, comprising:

(a) ~~tracking over a selected time period, for a set of the plurality of agents servicing a plurality of discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts~~~~over a selected time period, a number of discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts~~ serviced by the set of agents that are and/or are not related to one or more other discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts serviced by the plurality of agents; and

(b) maintaining, for the set of agents, an indicator indicating at least one of (i) a number of discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts, serviced by the set of agents during the selected time period, that are not related to one or more other discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts serviced by one or more of the plurality of agents and (ii) a number of discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts, serviced by the set of agents during the selected time period, that are related to one or more other discrete real-time and non-real-time contacts serviced by the plurality of agents.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

(c) when a first contact of a first customer is serviced by the set of agents, receiving from the servicing agent a subject matter identifier indicating a purpose of the serviced first contact; and

(d) when a later second contact is received from the first customer, comparing a second subject matter identifier associated with the second contact with the first subject matter identifier to determine whether the first and second contacts are related.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein, when the first and second identifiers are similar, the first and second contacts are deemed to be related.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein, when two contacts are received from the same customer during a predetermined period of time, the two contacts are deemed to be related.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

(c) monitoring a set of communications between a servicing agent in the set of agents and a customer during servicing of a contact; and

(d) based on the set of communications, determining that the contact is related to another contact from the same customer.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the monitoring step comprises:

analyzing the set of communications for at least one selected word and wherein in the determining step, the presence of the at least one selected word means that the contact is related to another contact.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein each agent in the set has a corresponding indicator indicating a number of contacts, serviced by the set of agents during a selected time period, that are (i) not related to another contact serviced by one or more of the plurality of agents or (ii) related to another contact serviced by one or more of the plurality of agents and further comprising:

(c) receiving a contact to be serviced by one of the plurality of agents;

(d) retrieving agent profiles for the set of agents; and

(e) assigning one of the set of agents to service the contact based, at least in part, on a comparison of the indicators corresponding to the agents in the set.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the set of agents during the selected time period, that are not related to another contact serviced by one or more of the plurality of agents and wherein a single contact is defined as each interaction between a selected agent and a selected customer such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent multiple contacts.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the set of agents during the selected time period, that are related to another contact serviced by one or more of the plurality of agents and wherein a single contact is defined as all interactions between all members of the set of agents and a selected customer

such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent a single contact.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the set of agents comprises one or more agents in the plurality of agents, wherein the related contact is a prior contact, and wherein the membership of the set of agents is defined by skill.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium comprising processor executable instructions to perform the steps of claim 1.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A ~~method for servicing contacts in a contact center,~~ comprising:

(a) at least one of receiving a first real-time contact from and initiating a second real-time contact with a first customer;

(b) determining whether the first and/or second contact is related to another real-time or non-real-time contact with the first customer; and

(c) when the first and/or second contact is related to another real-time or non-real-time contact with the first customer, servicing the first and/or second contact differently than when the first and/or second contact is unrelated to another real-time or non-real-time contact with the first customer.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein in step (a) the first real-time contact is in queue awaiting servicing and further comprising:

(d) while in queue, tagging the first ~~and/or second~~ contact with a number of related previous real-time and/or non-real-time contacts with the first customer.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the servicing step comprises:

when the first and/or second contact is related to a previous contact with the first customer, at least one of (i) recording the first and/or second contact interaction to form a transcript of the interaction, (ii) forwarding the first and/or second contact to a first agent having a first skill, and (iii) activating quality monitoring; and

when the first and/or second contact is unrelated to a previous contact with the first customer, not performing the at least one of (i) recording the first and/or second contact interaction to form a transcript of the interaction, (ii) forwarding the first and/or second contact to a first agent having a first skill, and (iii) activating quality monitoring.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein [[the]] a contact center includes a plurality of agents to service a plurality of contacts and further comprising:

(d) tracking, for each of the plurality of agents over a selected time period, a number of contacts serviced by the agent that are related to another contact serviced by the plurality of agents; and

(e) maintaining, for each of the plurality of agents, an indicator indicating at least one of (i) a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are not related to another contact serviced by the plurality of agents and (ii) a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are related to another contact serviced by the plurality of agents.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising:

(c) when the first and/or second contact of the first customer is serviced by an agent, receiving from the servicing agent a subject matter identifier indicating a purpose of the serviced contact; and

(d) when a later third contact is received from the first customer, comparing a second subject matter identifier associated with the third contact with the first subject matter identifier to determine whether the first and/or second and third contacts are related.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein, when the first and second identifiers are similar, the first and/or second and third contacts are deemed to be related.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein, when two contacts are received from the same customer during a predetermined period of time, the two contacts are deemed to be related.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising:

(e) monitoring a set of communications between a servicing agent and a customer during servicing of the first and/or second contact; and

(f) based on the set of communications, determining that the first and/or second contact is related to a previous contact from the same customer.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the monitoring step comprises:

analyzing the set of communications for at least one selected word and wherein in the determining step, the presence of the at least one selected word means that the first and/or second contact is related to the previous completed contact.

22. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising:

(e) receiving a third contact from a second customer to be serviced by one of the plurality of agents;

(f) retrieving agent profiles for a selected subset of the plurality of agents; and

(g) assigning one of the subset of agents to service the third contact based, at least in part, on a comparison of the indicators corresponding to the agents in the subset.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are not related to another contact serviced by the agent and wherein a single contact is defined as all interactions between all members of the set of agents and a selected customer such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent a single contact.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are related to a previous contact serviced by the agent and wherein a single contact is defined as each interaction between a selected agent and a selected customer such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent multiple contacts.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium comprising processor executable instructions to perform the steps of claim 13.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) A contact center for servicing contacts, comprising:

(a) an input operable to receive a contact from a first customer; and

(b) a selector operable (i) to determine whether the received real-time contact is related to another real-time or non-real-time contact with the first customer and (ii) when the received real-time contact is related to ~~another~~ at least one real-time and non-real-time contact with the first customer, to service the received real-time contact differently than when the received real-time contact is unrelated to ~~another~~ at least one real-time and non-real-time contact with the first customer.

28. (Currently Amended) The contact center of claim 27, wherein the selector is further operable (iii) to tag the received contact, while in queue awaiting servicing, with a number of related real-time and non-real-time contacts with the first customer.

29. (Original) The contact center of claim 27, wherein the selector, when the received contact is related to a previous contact with the first customer, at least one of (i) records the received contact interaction to form a transcript of the interaction, (ii) forwards the received contact to a first agent having a first skill, and (iii) activates quality monitoring and, when the received contact is unrelated to a previous contact with the first customer, does not at least one of (i) record the received contact interaction to form a transcript of the interaction, (ii) forward the received contact to a first agent having a first skill, and (iii) activate quality monitoring.

30. (Original) The contact center of claim 27, wherein the contact center includes a plurality of agents to service a plurality of contacts and further comprising:

(c) a repeat contact determining agent operable (i) to track, for each of the plurality of agents over a selected time period, a number of contacts serviced by the agent that are related to a previous contact serviced by the agent and (ii) to maintain, for each of the plurality of agents, an indicator indicating at least one of (a) a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are not related to a previous contact serviced by the agent and (b) a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are related to a previous contact serviced by the agent.

31. (Original) The contact center of claim 30, wherein the determining agent is further operable (iii), when a received contact of a first customer is serviced by an agent, to receive from the servicing agent a subject matter identifier indicating a purpose of the serviced received contact and (iv), when a later second contact is received from the first customer, to compare a second subject matter identifier associated with the second contact with the first subject matter identifier to determine whether the received and second contacts are related.

32. (Original) The contact center of claim 31, wherein, when the first and second identifiers are the same, the received and second contacts are deemed to be related.

33. (Original) The contact center of claim 30, wherein, when two contacts are received from the same customer during a predetermined period of time, the two contacts are deemed to be related.

34. (Currently Amended) The contact center of claim 30, wherein the determining agent is further operable (iii) to monitor a set of communications between a servicing agent and a customer during servicing of the received contact and (iv) , based on the set of communications, to determine that the received contact is related to a previous completed contact from the same customer.

35. (Original) The contact center of claim 34, wherein the determining agent analyzes the set of communications for at least one selected word and wherein, in the determining operation, the presence of the at least one selected word means that the received contact is related to the previous contact.

36. (Original) The contact center of claim 30, wherein the input is further operable to receive a second contact from a second customer to be serviced by one of the plurality of agents and wherein the selector is further operable (iii) to retrieve agent profiles for a selected subset of the plurality of agents and (iv) to assign one of the subset of agents to service the second contact based, at least in part, on a comparison of the indicators corresponding to the agents in the subset.

37. (Currently Amended) The contact center of claim 30, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are not related to a previous contact serviced by the agent and wherein a single contact is defined as each interaction between a selected agent and a selected customer such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent multiple contacts.

38. (Currently Amended) The contact center of claim 30, wherein the indicator indicates a number of contacts, serviced by the corresponding agent during the selected time period, that are related to a previous contact serviced by the agent and wherein a single contact is defined as all interactions between all members of the set of agents and a selected customer such that an agent-to-agent transfer of a communication from the selected customer is considered to represent a single contact.

39. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

(c) identifying, for at least one of an agent and selected grouping of agents a number of one-and-done contacts serviced by the at least one of an agent and selected grouping of agents,

wherein each of the one-and-done contacts is not related to one or more other contacts from a common customer.

40. (New) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

(d) identifying, for at least one of an agent and selected grouping of agents a number of one-and-done contacts serviced by the at least one of an agent and selected grouping of agents, wherein each of the one-and-done contacts is not related to one or more other contacts from a common customer.